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TAGS: PHUM PREL KTIA UNHRC UN SP

SUBJECT: SPAIN ON UN THIRD COMMITTEE COUNTRY-SPECIFIC
RESOLUTIONS

REF: A. STATE 182267

1B. STATE 183547

1C. STATE 156800

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Emboff delivered reftel A and B demarches to the MFA Subdirector General for Human Rights Fernando Fernandez-Arias on November 8. Fernandez-Arias said, "You have nothing to worry about from Spain" with respect to these resolutions. He said he thought it was a good strategy to have an up or down vote on the Belarus resolution on human rights in the U.S. He did note, however, that the two Belarus resolutions were well-crafted this year in contrast to previous retaliatory resolutions, and he said that the U.S. might face difficulty in gaining support outside of Europe. Emboff stated that country-specific resolutions were traditionally used by the UN only to address the issues of gravest concern, and that placing the U.S. in this category seemed inappropriate. Fernandez-Arias agreed, and noted that Spain has been very careful about limiting the number of resolutions it has proposed, despite the fact that he very much wants a resolution on human rights in Darfur.

12. (C) Emboff told Fernandez-Arias that the second Belarus resolution was more thoroughly and objectively addressed in other resolutions already under negotiation; his colleague Antonio Garca Roger, himself just returned from New York, said that this is an opinion which is gaining traction in New York among European nations. On lobbying for the U.S. resolution on Belarus, Fernandez-Arias said that Spain is happy to help, but he noted that the EU typically divvies up the world according to areas of influence when lobbying for resolutions, so he expected that Spain would receive a more specific instruction from Brussels or New York on where and how to support the resolution. With respect to the U.S. resolution on Uzbekistan, Fernandez-Arias said he thought it inconceivable that Spain would not support it, though he said that they had withheld their initial support because of wording issues.

13. (C) Fernandez-Arias made a special point of saying that Spain greatly appreciated the United States being the first nation to sign on as a cosponsor (after the EU) of their religious freedom resolution. He emphasized how much Spain appreciated this gesture. Lastly, he asked if the U.S. intended to seek membership on the Human Rights Council. Emboff summarized the points from Ref C and said that the organization is not proving itself much more effective than its predecessor.

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